

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 305
By Cohen

A RESOLUTION to recognize the visitors to the Stax Museum
Opening Events as Honorary Tennesseans.

WHEREAS, from the mountains in the East, to the honky-tonks of Nashville, to the streets of Memphis, the sounds of music emanate from every corner of this great State; and

WHEREAS, from Hank Williams to Elvis Presley, the Carter Family to the Staple Singers, and Otis Redding to Isaac Hayes, Tennessee has borne and nourished the music that revolutionized American culture; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is recognized throughout the world as the home to country music, the blues, and sweet soul music; and

WHEREAS, visitors to this great State share with its citizens a common love and respect for the sounds, cultures, and sites of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, citizens and visitors alike will gather in Memphis from April 27 through May 1, 2003, to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Stax Museum; and

WHEREAS, the developers of the Stax Museum recognize the utmost importance of the music that was created within the walls of the Stax Records recording studios; the Museum is devoted to the documentation and preservation of the Stax legacy; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, former country fiddler Jim Stewart, and his sister, Estelle Axton, founded what would, in 1961, become Stax Records; the label's first hit was "Cause I Love You," by Rufus and Carla Thomas; and

WHEREAS, second only to Motown in popular soul music sales and influence, Stax Records was nevertheless first in gritty, raw, stripped-down soul; featuring artists like Otis Redding, Rufus & Carla Thomas, Sam & Dave, and Isaac Hayes, and with house band Booker T. and the MGs, and horn section The Memphis Horns, Stax placed over 167 hit songs in the top 100 on the pop charts and an astounding 243 hits in the top 100 R & B charts over the course of fifteen years; and

WHEREAS, the influence of the Stax sound can still be felt thirty years later in so many musical genres; songs like "Green Onions," "(Sittin' on the) Dock of the Bay," "Soul Man," "I'll Take You There," "Hold On, I'm Comin'," and "Theme from Shaft," have become part of the popular music vernacular, and they are instantly recognizable by music fans and casual listeners alike; and

WHEREAS, perhaps most vital to the success of Stax Records was the cooperation between white and black musicians and producers, an integration that was practically unprecedented at the time; and

WHEREAS, through these many years, the Stax legacy has remained strong, for though the spirit was beset by the blows of circumstance, it was in the music until the end, when Stax Records was forced to take a bankruptcy in 1975; and

WHEREAS, though the walls of the original Stax Records have fallen, the dedicated fans of soul music, Stax-style, have kept its heartbeat alive; and

WHEREAS, indeed, the music's influence continues to be felt worldwide, as visitors from across the nation and the globe will journey to Memphis to the Grand Opening of the Stax Museum, a standing monument to the legacy of the most famous soul music record label from Tennessee, dedicated to the memories of the Stax Records family; and

WHEREAS, in particular, Mr. Patrick Montier will travel from Rennes, France, to be a part of the Stax celebration; Mr. Montier is a shining example of a dedicated fan of Memphis soul music, having designed and collected one of the most comprehensive archives of information about Stax Records; and

WHEREAS, truly dedicated to the Stax label, and possessing a love for its people and products that has been enduring since 1965, Mr. Montier regularly communicated with the Stax staff, and upon opening mail from the record company, would inhale the air within just so he could share in a small part of the Stax experience; and

WHEREAS, certainly not alone in his love for Stax Soul, Mr. Montier will be joined in Memphis by his wife, Marie-Anne; Florent Mazzoleni, a freelance journalist from France; Graziano Uliani, Artistic Director of the Porretta (Italy) Soul Festival; Ray Ellis, of *Juke Blues* magazine in England; Nick Sands, freelance journalist and photographer from the United Kingdom; Chris Maher, of *Soul Kitchen* in Dublin, Ireland; Rene Wu, a soul music historian from the Netherlands; Professor Rob Bowman, Grammy Award-winning ethnomusicologist, and author of *Soulsville, USA--The Story of Stax Records*, visiting from York University in Toronto, Canada; Colin Dilnot with Top Drawer Productions in the United Kingdom; Garry Cape, of *Soul Cellar* in the United Kingdom; and fans and soul collectors from the United Kingdom: David Buckle, Jan Barker, John and Mo Marriott, Salv Macasil, and Mike Fill; and

WHEREAS, visiting from across this great nation are William Saunders, Editor of *Harvard Design* magazine in Massachusetts; Eric Karten, producer for Pitbull Pictures in Los Angeles; Karen Moncrieff, producer for Zoo Arts Group in Los Angeles; Rickey Stevens, producer/owner of Three Kids Music in Arkabutla, MS; Charly and Lisa Gouvenia of Austin, TX;

Kevin Day of Dallas, TX; Don "Agent 'Double-O' Soul" Priest and his wife, Rosemary, of Park City, UT; Judy Gonzalez of the Bronx, NY; Louie Wear of Killen, AL; Theresa Evans of Rialto, CA; Betty "Swampmamalama" Breslin of Mobile, AL; Barbara Buchbinder of Evanston, IL; and Maggie Ginn of Lake Comorant, MS; and

WHEREAS, members and family members of the original Stax family will also be present; they include Tim Whitsett, III, son of noted author Tim Whitsett, Jr., of the Stax Marketing Department; Mr. Ron Gordon, a former member of the Bar-Kays now living in Rogers, AR, and his wife and son; Sir Mack Rice, who wrote and recorded "Mustang Sally," from Detroit; and Sandy Logan, widow of the Stax tenor saxophonist, from Mobile, AL; and

WHEREAS, many residents of Memphis will be providing Southern hospitality, Tennessee style, including Carl "Blue" Wise, producer of soul music records; "Sloppy" Joe and Carol Pusateri; Cherrie Holden; Bob and Christina Holden; Bobby Manuel, former Stax producer and musician and current owner of High Stax Records in Memphis; Larry Nix, former Stax producer, now with Ardent Studio; and Sherman Wilmott, Board member of Soulsville, USA, and owner of Shangri-La records; and

WHEREAS, the love of everything and everyone that was and is Stax is the common bond among all of the visitors who will participate in the Stax Museum opening celebration; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting for the members of this General Assembly to pause and to bestow upon these visitors the title of "Honorary Tennessean", so that they may continue to serve as ambassadors of our great State; we welcome them from around the world and invite them to travel the Music Highway as honorary citizens of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, as the great Stax duo, Sam & Dave, might say: "We've got to thank you"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby bestow upon each of the many fine visitors to our State who will

journey from near and far for the Grand Opening of the Stax Museum in Memphis the title of "Honorary Tennessean". We thank them for their dedication to the preservation of Memphis Soul Music, and we encourage their continued patronage and support.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.